

## **Anhang TW 42/43**

*Zivilgesellschaftlicher Beitrag des 7. „Global Civil Society Forums“ (5.- 6.2.2006 in Dubai) zu Tourismus und Umwelt, übermittelt an die 9. Verwaltungsrats-Sondersitzung des Umweltprogramms der Vereinten Nationen (UNEP) und des Globalen Umweltminister-Forums (7.-9.2.2006 in Dubai). „Annex V“ des Dokuments UNEP/GCS/7/1 vom 02.03.2006.*

### **Statement on sustainable tourism**

1. The non-governmental organization major group is very pleased that the issue of tourism is being addressed in this forum. After extensive deliberations at the Global Civil Society Forum, we would like to emphasize strongly the following issues related to sustainable tourism. Tourism is becoming increasingly important to national economies, and it must not be underestimated as a means of increasing intercultural understanding and promoting peace in our troubled world.
2. It is vitally important that sustainable tourism principles are applied to all aspects of the industry. Biodiversity, cultural diversity and sustainable tourism development are crucially interlinked. The local community should retain ownership over tourism development and be directly involved in participatory planning and implementation processes in the short and long term.
3. Labelling for sustainable tourism products is an effective way of identifying tourism products and services that are truly committed to the principles of sustainable tourism. We request that UNEP join the steering committee of the Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council, a global body to accredit and harmonize existing certification programmes on a voluntary basis. We look forward to the day when so-called “destination labelling” will further assist consumers in making sustainable tourism choices.
4. We call on Governments to work vigorously with the International Civil Aviation Organization to lessen the impacts of air travel on the environment, especially because international aviation emissions are not included under the Kyoto Protocol targets. One way of compensating for the environmental impacts of air travel emissions is to offset the carbon released by investing in renewable energy products. We call for UNEP to set an example to the rest of the international community by offsetting all employee travel in this manner.
5. Environmental education is also a key component to sustainable tourism. Through awareness-raising, formal education and training opportunities, we can educate local populations and tourists alike. To this end, we urgently support the Decade for Education on Sustainable Development and would like to see this initiative supported by Governments and by UNEP.
6. Tourism is integral to the International Year for Deserts and Desertification. We request that Governments include, in the provisional agenda of the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly, discussion of ecotourism issues in the subitem entitled “Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind.” We have begun a productive dialogue on tourism and the environment and heard many admirable statements here today. Let it not end without specific resolutions on how best to harness the positive potential of this growing industry. We ask that tourism, as a cross-cutting issue, be given a special focus both in multilateral environmental agreements and in the UNEP programme of work. Will sustainable tourism be operationalized and sufficiently funded at the national level? We hope so.